

CARDIFF ARE FORMER F.A. CUP WINNERS

CARDIFF City is Wales' oldest professional club, being formed on an amateur basis in 1899 under the title of Riverside F.C. It acquired its present name four years later when Cardiff achieved City status, but it was not until 1910 when the famous Ninian Park ground was acquired, that the Club was re-formed and joined the Southern League.

Ninian Park was officially opened on September 1 1910, with a friendly against Aston Villa which the visitors won 2-1. As members of the Second Division of the Southern League they did extremely well and by 1912/13 were the champions, gaining promotion to the First Division and winning the Welsh Cup for the first time.

They continued to play under wartime conditions until 1915 but were then forced to discontinue until

1919 when they reached the fourth position in the First Division of the Southern League.

The 1920 season heralded the first great highlight in the Club's history when they

and Queen Mary) attended a cup semi-final. The result of this match was a goalless draw and in the replay at Manchester, Wolverhampton won 3-1.

By the '1922-23 season

ing through one of its most brilliant phases and after an epic struggle City went down by a single goal.

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period and in two short years City went from the height to the depths. Winning only eight matches and scoring but 43 goals in 1929 they were relegated to the Second Division.

The rot really set in and, after gaining a respectable position (8th) in season 1929-30, the following year they were dropping up the league table and for the first time, Third Division football arrived at Ninian Park.

The years from 1931 to 1939 were lean indeed. So lean that the club's league position during 1932-37 was 19th, 22nd, 19th, 20th and 18th respectively. Fortunes sunk to the lowest depths when in 1933/34, Cardiff had to apply for re-election. By 1938 the Board had been reconstructed with Sir Herbert, then Mr. H. H. Merrett, as chairman. There was only one objective in view — First Division football again at Ninian Park.

Unfortunately the war intervened, but immediately afterwards City topped Division Three with a total of 66 points. Four years later, their triumph was complete when promotion to the First Division was obtained.

The recovery continued. In 1952 there was a return to the First Division and after relegation in 1957, another bite at First Division football in 1960.

Many will remember the match at Ninian Park when City beat Aston Villa by one goal to make sure of promotion. But once again the stay in Division One was brief, only two seasons in fact.

Cardiff stayed in the Second Division until last season when they were relegated once again. But this term, under manager, Jimmy Andrews, the club have shown the form that could take them straight back at the first attempt.

The season began badly for them but Cardiff are now unbeaten in 12 matches and occupy fifth place in the table.

Some of Cardiff's best moments have come in the European Cup winners Cup which they have entered on six occasions.

Their first tilt in Europe took them to wins over Esbjerg and Sporting Lisbon, the holders, before being eliminated in the quarter finals by Real Zaragoza of Spain.

Two seasons ago City went one stage further, to the semi-finals. Their most famous victory in that season was against Moscow Torpedo, beaten 1-0 in a play-off near Munich after each club had won the home leg of its tie by a single goal.

The history of Cardiff Football Club

were invited to become members of the Second Division of the English League. They promptly celebrated it by running Birmingham City to a fraction of a goal for the championship and were worthy runners-up.

Thus began the second great epoch and in the following season they gave an indication of things to come by reaching the semi-final of the F.A. Cup for the first time.

The match was played at Liverpool and this was the only occasion in the history of the F.A. Cup when the royal family (King George V

Cardiff City were ranking with the greatest teams in the land and had the mortification of again losing the championship of the First Division to Huddersfield Town by .01 of a goal.

The team was packed with Welsh, Irish and Scottish Internationals, names that will remain famous as long as football is played. It took only two more seasons for the club to reach yet another historical landmark — Wembley and a cup final with Wales represented for the first time. The opponents on that occasion were Sheffield United, a club also go-

ing through one of its most brilliant phases and after an epic struggle City went down by a single goal.

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